

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, November 4, 2013

The Center of Clayton – OASIS Room B

Members present: Ira Berkowitz, Laurel Harrington, Michelle Harris, Darryl Higuchi, Jeanne Most, Becky Patel. Eric Schneider, Melanie Tamsky and Mark Winings

Absent: Brad Bernstein and Mark Stapleton

Also Present: Patty DeForrest, Wayne Dunker, Toni Siering and Denise Ucinski.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes from the September meeting were approved as written.

Opening Statements: Mr. Berkowitz welcomed Ms. Becky Patel to the Commission. Ms. Patel provided the following information about herself: she has been a Clayton resident for three years, is involved in the Young Friends Council at Missouri Botanical Gardens, she and her daughter enjoy Clayton parks and she is excited to be part of the Commission.

Ms. DeForrest introduced Mr. Wayne Dunker, the new Recreation Manager for the Parks and Recreation department. Mr. Dunker told the Commission that he graduated from Southeast Missouri State University, worked in State Parks while in college, after college he worked for the cities of Crestwood, Fenton and Webster Groves.

Mr. Berkowitz acknowledged the Clayton High School students from the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council.

Addresses from the Audience:

A group of avid swimmers addressed the Commission in regards to their interest in having a cover installed over the Shaw Park Aquatic Center (SPAC) in order to extend the season. Mr. Steve Gelber was designated as their spokesperson. Mr. Gelber mentioned that swimmers whom they have spoken with in regards to the potential project with are ecstatic; there is also an architect who is interested in being involved. He discussed the fact that a 50 meter pool is a huge asset in the St. Louis area. Currently the Rec Plex in St. Peters, Missouri is the only indoor 50 meter pool in the St. Louis Region. CSP Swim Team is also interested; the ability to use SPAC would help with overflow at The Center of Clayton.

Ms. Jeanne Most asked the group about the type of covering they would like to have installed over the pool. Mr. Gelber said the cover would be inflatable, removable and have good air quality.

Mr. Todd Thomason mentioned the following to the Commission: he uses different pools in the area, the city needs more lanes, there may be a benefactor willing to make a monetary donation to fund the cover and the cover will not take up any green space or affect trees.

Mr. Berkowitz told the group of swimmers this was the first time he heard about installing a cover over the pool. He mentioned that they should keep the process going and come back to the Commission when their plan is more crystalized. Ms. DeForrest said she will speak more about swimming in a 50 meter pool at the December or January meeting. She will also provide renderings of pools with covers.

Shaw Park Multi-Use Facility:

Mr. Berkowitz spoke about the history behind the development of the Shaw Park Multi-Use Facility design. Seven years ago the BOA made the decision to close the ice rink based on safety factors that needed to be addressed. The work was expensive and the Board felt that further investment in a facility used by a small number of residents would not be fiscally prudent. An ice rink survey was conducted which determined that sixty-seven percent of residents wanted the ice rink to stay open; at

that time the Ice Rink Task Force was formed. The task force met for about a year and a half. After studying the market and potential other uses for the facilities they made the recommendation to the Board that the facility be renovated to include a cover that would extend the rink season and provide for a venue for off season usage for other purposes. Six years later a conceptual design of a Multi-Use Facility has been completed. Jacobs developed a design that is acceptable to residents who live across the street from the park; residents want to be able to see skaters therefore the cover had to be as permeable as possible. The renderings have been through public review on many occasions; however, there will need to be further outreach to get the plan wide circulation in the community.

The ice rink has been doing well since it re-opened after the closure. Public session hours were expanded, hockey rental revenue increased and last year the rink operated in the black which was a huge milestone. The ice rink is operating on a year to year schedule since the inner workings are old and could potentially fail. Furthermore, the chemicals for the ice making system will be unavailable after 2019.

Ms. DeForrest noted that the multi-use facility boards are more detailed than the presentation. The explanations of usage for the multi-use facility are shown in three different renderings: Ice Rink, field usage in spring/summer and Classic Car Show or other special events. Artificial turf would be used in the spring and summer for various activities.

At this time, funding is not in place for this project. The Clayton Century Foundation (CCF) would like to begin fundraising for this facility. When funding is in place it is estimated that it will take eighteen months to two years to build the facility.

Ms. Patel asked who will make decisions about facility usage in the off season. Ms. DeForrest said a feasibility study will tell more about how it should be used. During the week it could be used for sports, then on the weekend it be used for a special event. Fees would increase at the rink to offset operational expenses.

After discussing the benefits of a state of the art multi-use facility, Eric Schneider made a motion in support of the Shaw Park Multi-Use Facility design concept. Ms. Tamsky seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Shaw Park Master Plan Overlay:

Ms. DeForrest discussed the draft document that has been presented to the Commission for consideration. She explained that the Board of Aldermen were presented with this in September and would like the Commission to weigh in on their support for the plan. This plan was done in order to tie together not only projects that had been completed from the 2007 Master Plan but also to incorporate the new design of the Multi-purpose facility. In addition, the concept proposed for the north end of the park was evaluated. Ms. DeForrest reminded the Commission that a donor had stepped forward in 2012 and discussions began on the north hill; it was felt that the proposed project was impactful and that a full study of it in relation to the other work already underway in the park would vet whether there was support for the project as proposed. Over the course of the past year SWT has met with stakeholders, attended two P & R Commission Meetings, attended two Board of Aldermen meetings, held an Open House at the Center and worked with a steering committee on which Mimi Deem and Marguerite Garrick served along with city staff and the President of the Clayton Century Foundation. In addition a Vision Advisory Committee was formed to weigh in on the overall plan as well as to strategize on fund raising for the plan. The result of these meetings is the draft plan under consideration at this time.

There was discussion on the merits of the projects with the group in consensus that they were in support of the priority projects. The Commission had questions about the additional projects and asked for more time to study them. Ms. DeForrest indicated that this would not be a problem and would be prepared to look at them further next month.

The Commission asked what action, if any, they would need to take for the BOA. There was discussion of whether or not to vote on the priority projects and wait to consider the rest of the plan at

a future date. Ms. Patel made a motion that the Commission supports pursuing the priority projects of the Shaw Park Master Plan Overlay; Mr. Higuchi seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Director's Report:

Ms. DeForrest reported that the Oak Knoll Playground grant has been submitted. A new helmet policy will be implemented at the ice rink this season. After an in depth discussion and feedback, it was determined that helmets will be available, parents will be encouraged to have their children wear them and employees will have them on at all times.

The Enterprise Holdings Pavilion is taking shape. There will be some type of dedication in the spring. The field project started and will be completed in the spring. Ms. DeForrest will speak with Mr. Hohenstein to find out what type of feedback he has received in reference to youth basketball registration.

Old Business / New Business:

No old or new business to report.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted By: Denise Ucinski

